
To prevent and treat disease and disability; to promote healthy lifestyles; and to protect and promote the health and quality of our environment.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION MONTH “Be Cool – Chill Out! Refrigerate Promptly”

September is National Food Safety Education Month. *Be Cool – Chill Out! Refrigerate Promptly* is this year’s theme. Harmful bacteria grow most rapidly in the Danger Zone – the unsafe temperatures between 40 and 140 °F. It’s important to keep food out of this temperature range. In addition, cold temperatures keep most harmful bacteria from growing; therefore, refrigerating food quickly is the key!

Here are some tips for keeping cold food cold:

- Make sure the temperature in the refrigerator is 40°F or colder.
- Use a refrigerator/freezer thermometer to check the temperature.
- Don’t overfill the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to help keep food safe.
- Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food, and leftovers within 2 hours of purchase or preparation, or within 1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F.
- Thaw food in the refrigerator. For quick thawing, submerge in cold water in airtight packaging, or thaw in the microwave, and cook the food immediately.
- Divide large quantities of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.
- Marinate food in the refrigerator.
- When transporting food, place cold food in a cooler with a cold source such as ice or commercial freezing gels. Keep the cooler in the coolest part of your car.
- Store raw meats beneath all other food items (think, “bottom shelf or drawer”).

Bacteria don’t care who you are or where you are; they are programmed to do their job, and that can make you sick. Be smarter than a germ, and prevent food related illness. **BE COOL-CHILL OUT! REFRIGERATE PROMPTLY!**

For more information on food safety, visit the Fight BAC! Web site at: www.fightbac.org

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